projects under implementation for their completion subject to certain special terms and conditions which inter-alia include pledging of promoters' share holding, appointment of an independent engineer to supervise implementation, appointment of concurrent auditors, 100% conve ion option for the new loans and establishment of a cash flow monitoring mechanism. Reportedly, the steel companies are generally agreeable to these conditions.

(d) No clearance from the Union Government is required for setting up a steel project in the private sector, save for certain locational restrictions. During 1998-99, as per available information, four units are likely to commence commercial production with likely additional capacity of about 2.7 Million Tonnes.

(e) No, Sir.

Breakdown of Aluminium Plant in Orissa

2445. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for the frequent breakdown of NALCO's Aluminium Plant in Orissa;

(b) the number of times there was breakdown in that Aluminium Plant during the last three years and the losses sustained on account of breakdown;

(c) the steps taken to avc such incidents; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) to (d) Breakdown of NALCO's Aluminium Plant is not frequent. There was no breakdown in the Aluminium Smelter Plant of National Aluminium Company Ltd. (NALCO) during the last three years i.e. 1997-98, 1996-97 and 1995-96. A breakdown occured only in 1998-99.

Demand and Production of Zinc

2446. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a wide gap between domestic demand and production of Zinc in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the steps taken to meet the demand of Zinc metal; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) to (d) There is a gap between the domestic demand and production of zinc in the country and the Primary producers of zinc metal in the country are unable to meet the total domestic demand. Domestic production capacity could not be built up in view of the limited availability of mineral resources in the country. At present, the gap between the domestic demand and primary production of the metal is met through recycling and imports under Open General Licence (OGL). However, Hindustan Zinc Limited (HZL) by debottlenecking of their existing smelters at Debari and Visakhapatnam propose to increase the capacity of zinc metal by 10,000 tonnes each. Feasibility study is also in progress by HZL for setting up a new zinc smelter with a capacity of 100,000 tonnes per annum. Binani India Limited (BIL) has plans to increase the zinc metal production capacity from existing 30,000 tonnes per annum to 60,000 tonnes per annum during the 9th Five Year Plan. BIL have also proposal to set up new green-field plant for zinc produ ion during 9th/10th Five Year Plan.

Release of Funds for Magnite Mines

2447. SH' BANGARU LAXMAN: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Gujarat Government has requested for release of funds for magnite mines in the State:

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether funds have been released for the purpose; and

(d) if not, by when the funds will be released?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) Allocation of funds to State Governments and Union Territories is made by Planning Commission. As per information furnished by Planning Commission, no request has been received from Gujarat Government for release of funds for magnetite mines in the State.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

Deletion of Limestone and Bauxite

2448. SHRI PRAFULL GORADIA: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Gujarat has represented to delete limestone and bauxite from the list of Scheduled minerals shown in Schedule I of MMRD Act, 1957; and

(b) if so, the decision thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The proposal for deletion of Limestone and Bauxite from Schedule I of the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957, has been considered by the Committee constituted under the Chairmanship of the then Secretary (Mines) with the Secretaries of some of the State Governments including the Government of Gujarat, Secretary General, Federation of Indian Mineral Industries, Controller General, Indian Bureau of Mines etc. as members. The terms of reference of the Committee inter-alia, included review of the existing laws and procedures governing regulation and development of minerals and to recommend steps to make them compatible with the policy changes and to suggest steps to reduce delays in grant/renewal of Prospecting Licences/Mining Leases. The Committee was also to consider and suggest further delegation of powers to the State Governments regarding grant/renewal of Prospecting Licences/Mining Leases and measures to be taken to prevent illegal mining. The Committee has since submitted its report on which necessary action for amendment in the Mines and Minerals (Regulation & Development) Act, 1957 and Rules made thereunder has already been initiated.

इस्पात उद्योग की लघु और मझौली इकाइयां

2449. **श्री चीमनभाई हरीभाई शुक्ला:** क्या **इस्पात और खान** मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) देश के इस्पात उद्योग की लघु और मझौली इकाइयों को जो मन्दी के दौर से गुजर रही हैं, संगठित करने के लिए सरकार की नीति क्या है;

(ख) क्या सरकार द्वारा इस्पात उद्योग की लघु और मझौली इकाइयों को वित्तीय सहायता उपलब्ध कराने के लिए कोई विशेष प्रयास किये गये हैं;

(ग) क्या इस विकट परिस्थिति में राज्य विद्युत बोर्डों द्वारा उनकी कटिनाइयां बढ़ाई जा रही हैं;

(घ) यदि हां, तो क्या सरकार उनको उचित दिशा-निर्देश दे रही है; और

(ङ) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है?

इस्पात और खान मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री रमेश बैस): (क) और (ख) इस्पात उद्योग को जुलाई, 1991 से लाइसेंस से मुक्त कर दिया गया है और इस पर से नियंत्रण समाप्त कर दिया गया है। उद्योग के साथ-साथ इकाइयों का भविष्य पूरी तरह से बाजार परिस्थितियों पर निर्भर करता है।

मौजूदा प्रतिकूल बाजार परिस्थितियों पर काबू पाने के लिए सरकार ने अन्य बातों के साथ-साथ निम्नलिखित कदम उठाए हैं:

(1) इस्पात की मांग, विशेष रूप से गैर-परम्परागत क्षेत्रों जैसे ग्रामीण और कृषि आधारित औद्योगिक क्षेत्रों में, बढ़ाने के लिए एक राष्ट्रीय अभियान शुरू करना।

(2) अनेक आदानों जैसे कोककर कोयला (12% से कम राखांश) अकोककर कोयला (12% से कम राखांश)